

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USINJC, IN, US

SUBJECT: INDO-AMERICAN ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMISSION

REF: A) NEW DELHI 10124

B) STATE 176657

C) NEW DELHI 10193

1. ON JULY 29, INDIAN COMMERCIAL MINISTER DIXIT MET WITH EB DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BILLER AND OTHER DEPT REPS TO REVIEW STATUS OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMISSION WORK. (BECAUSE BILLER SCHEDULED TO BE OUT OF TOWN, WE WERE UNABLE TO POSTPONE SESSION TO WAIT FOR MATERIAL FORWARDED WITH JULY 25 LETTER MENTIONED REF A.)

2. INDIANS RAISED QUESTION OF ADVISABILITY OF SCHEDULING
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MEETING OF ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMISSION PRIOR TO OCTOBER JOINT COMMISSION MEETING IN ORDER TO PREPARE REPORT TO THE FULL COMMISSION. BILLER THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE UNNECESSARY SINCE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT COULD BE

HANDLED AT STAFF LEVELS HERE IN WASHINGTON. HE THEN REVIEWED ACTION ITEMS RECOMMENDED BY JANUARY SUBCOMMISSION MEETING:

A. JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL - BILLER NOTED ORVILLE FREEMAN WOULD BE HEADING US SECTION AND THAT FIRST MEETING SLATED TO TAKE PLACE THIS WINTER IN DELHI. DIXIT THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE INDIAN SIDE MIGHT INCLUDE GOI REPS AS WELL AS REPS FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR.

B. DOUBLE TAXATION TREATY - INDIANS HAVE YET TO RESPOND TO PROPOSAL OF LATE AUGUST AS DATE FOR VISIT BY INDIAN EXPERTS FOR TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS. DIXIT THOUGHT THAT THIS TIMING PROBABLY NOT CONVENIENT TO GOI BUT HE HAD NO OFFICIAL WORD. BECAUSE OF CONTINUING TIGHT SCHEDULING ON AMERICAN SIDE, BILLER EXPRESSED FEAR THAT MATTER WOULD DRAG ON IF THESE DATES COULD NOT BE MET.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, INDIAN OFFICIAL INFORMED DEPT THAT AUGUST DATES WERE UNACCEPTABLE, AND THAT GOI WOULD PROPOSE NEW DATES SHORTLY.

C. MICA SALES - PROBLEM OF MICA SALES BY GSA FROM USG STOCKPILES HAS BEEN MITIGATED SOMEWHAT, BUT US IMPORTERS REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT TAKEOVER OF PRIVATE TRADE BY MICA TRADING CORPORATION. DIXIT SUGGESTED THAT IMPORTERS NEED TO BE CONVINCED THAT MTC WILL NOT JEOPARDIZE OPERATIONS; HE SAID HE WAS RECOMMENDING THAT GOI INVITE US IMPORTERS TO GO TO INDIA, TO OBSERVE AND CONSULT, IN HOPES OF BUILDING UP CONFIDENCE OF US FIRMS IN THE NEW ARRANGEMENT.

D. GSP - THE LISTS CONTAINING ITEMS OF INTEREST HAVE ALREADY BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION. DIXIT SAID A SUPPLEMENTAL LIST WAS BEING PREPARED, BUT ASSURED BILLER THAT NO NEW ITEMS WOULD BE PRESENTED IN THE LIST; RATHER IT WAS TO BE A RECATEGORY-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ZATION ACCORDING TO INDIAN COMMERCIAL SCHEDULES.

E. INVESTMENT CLIMATE - DIXIT ADMITTED GOI HAD YET TO SUBMIT LIST PROMISED AT SUBCOMMISSION MEETING OF PRIORITY INDUSTRIES IN WHICH US INVESTMENT WOULD BE WELCOMED AND HOPED THIS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING, HOPEFULLY BY THE END OF AUGUST. HE ASKED ABOUT LIST OF SECTORS THAT AMERICAN FIRMS ARE INTERESTED IN, BUT BILLER SAID OUR SIDE WAS NOT IN POSITION TO PROVIDE SUCH AN INVENTORY.

BILLER THEN BROACHED SUBJECT OF THE HATHI REPORT AND THE CONCERN WITH WHICH IT IS VIEWED BY AMERICAN

PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS. DIXIT SAID GOI HAS KEPT AN OPEN MIND ABOUT REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND HAS REACHED NO DECISION ABOUT IT. BILLER SAID THAT HE HOPED REPORT

WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN JOINT COMMISSION IN TERMS OF POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE FLOW OF TECHNOLOGY AND ITS EFFECT ON OVERALL INVESTMENT CLIMATE. DIXIT SAID THE REPORT WAS OF LEGITIMATE CONCERN FOR HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSION WITHIN JOINT COMMISSION.

BEGIN FYI - WE HAVE TOLD WALTER WIEN OF WYETH (REFS B & C) THAT WE RAISED HATHI REPORT WITH DIXIT AND HAVE PROPOSED ITS INCLUSION IN JOINT COMMISSION AGENDA. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR DEPARTMENT EFFORTS AND WELCOMED JOINT COMMISSION APPROACH. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUES TO URGE US TO USE ALL AVAILABLE CHANNELS TO CONVEY OUR POSITION TO GOI. END FYI.

F. MINERAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - BILLER SAID THE USG IS STILL AWAITING GOI VIEWS ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THIS AREA.

G. JOINT VENTURES IN THIRD COUNTRIES - BILLER EXPLAINED THE USG IS STILL AWAITING LIST OF POSSIBLE PROJECTS FROM GOI. DIXIT SAID THAT GOI HAS TRIED TO IDENTIFY AREAS BUT HAS BEEN TOLD BY THIRD COUNTRY GOVERNMENTS TO CONTACT AMERICAN CONTRACTORS. GOI NEEDED ADVICE CONCERNING WHO TO CONTACT IN THE U.S. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THIS POSSIBLY COULD BE MATTER FOR JOINT BUSINESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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COUNCIL.

H. INDIAN MARKET SURVEY TEAM VISITS - DIXIT SAID THAT ENGINEERING PRODUCTS MISSION SCHEDULED FOR APRIL WILL TAKE PLACE STARTING ON SEPTEMBER 7 FOR FOUR TO SIX WEEKS. BILLER OFFERED USG ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGEMENTS, ETC.

I. EXCHANGE OF MARKETING INFORMATION - IT WAS NOTED THAT DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDIAN TRADE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY HAVE ESTABLISHED A CHANNEL OF CONTACT, BUT NO INFORMATION HAS AS YET STARTED TO FLOW.

J. AGRICULTURAL INPUTS - THE WORKING GROUP MET IN JANUARY TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY AND REQUIREMENTS OF FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES, BUT SINCE SHORTAGES HAVE EASED CONSIDERABLY, THIS CHANNEL HAS NOT BEEN USED SINCE. BILLER SUGGESTED A POSSIBLE MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. DIXIT THOUGHT THIS COULD BE USEFUL.

DIXIT BROUGHT UP OLD PROBLEMS OF DATURA SEEDS IN

GOI SORGHUM PURCHASES. HE THOUGHT THAT WITH RECENT PUBLICITY ABOUT AMERICAN GRAIN EXPORT IMPURITIES, THE

GOI MAY WANT TO DISCUSS IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKING GROUP THE POSSIBILITY OF PREINSPECTION OF SHIPMENTS.

K. HEALTH REGULATIONS - AN "EARLY WARNING" MECHANISM HAS BEEN SET UP TO INFORM INDIANS ABOUT ANY CHANGES IN FDA REGULATIONS CONCERNING FOOD IMPORTS EARLY ENOUGH TO AVOID SHIPMENT TIE-UPS.

L. MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS - DIXIT SAID THAT GOI WOULD PRESENT LIST WITHIN ONE WEEK WHICH WOULD DEAL MOSTLY WITH TROPICAL PRODUCTS.

3. DIXIT SAID HE WOULD SEND OFF FULL REPORT ABOUT SESSION AND TRY TO PROD DELHI FOR EARLY RESPONSES ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS. HE AND BILLER AGREED TO BE BACK IN TOUCH IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS TO DISCUSS PREPARATIONS FOR EARLY OCT. MEETING. INGERSOLL

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